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is well able to look after herself, choose her mate and defy the world. "We're hard stuff, we're hard stuff," she says to her husband at the close. Mr. Wells shows his entire belief in his heroine by letting her win out in the end, and we see her settling down into the happy ever-after stage of life.

The book has a good deal of scathing social satire and keen observation. Mr. Wells is no stylist; it is not literature or beauty he is after, but a plain picture of life, and in giving this he is entirely successful.

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Here comes Mr. Hewlett,\* the poet again, with no mercy on our emotions and no tenderness for his own characters, so long as he has free scope, through his mouthpiece, Mr. John Senhouse, the philosopher (whom we take to be a near relative of Mr. Edward Carpenter) to discuss his theories of life, art and literature. Mr. Senhouse's earlier love-affair is given here, but it hardly counts compared with the beautiful theories of the rational life with nature, the necessity of poetry to life, the picture of the ideal woman. Other pictures eminently well observed are those of Sancier's numerous family. As to Sancier herself, we feel much as Burne-Jones did about Tess when he declared that nothing would induce him "to read about nice girls getting hanged." There are women and women, and while we read unmoved of Ann Veronica's advanced theories and methods without a qualm, knowing, as she said that she was "hard stuff" and would win out, we rebel against the fate of Sancier. She was exquisite, thoughtful, pliable and open-minded, lovely and should somehow have been saved from suffering.

We do not, however, read Mr. Hewlett for the story, but for beauty, and this is in the book in generous measure.

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A GIFT book is usually a book that no one would have except as a present, but here is a costly volume† of worth incalculable. It is more than historical, it is profound, in its interpretation of Asian art. It is full of strangeness and charm and wisdom. It

\* "Open Country." By Maurice Hewlett. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909.

† "Paintings in the Far East." By Laurence Binyon. London: Edward Arnold. New York: Longmans, Green & Co.

deals with the spirit and with the life of man and with the essence of beauty. It is literally the only book of its kind in English. And by way of supererogation, it is a brilliant piece of printing, delightful to eye and touch, and furnished with thirty superb reproductions of ageless masterpieces. This is a work to study by heart and come back to often, of works on art (and the word is said advisedly) the most important in the last decade, and the most enchanting of more than half that time.

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Mr. Howells lays more stress on his age than any one else would like to. Sometimes, especially in the closing essay,\* he allows himself the wise saws as well as the modern instances; oftener he just gently sighs for the youthful hose. There is no one living, perhaps, to whom life has been so kindly as to him, softening, mellowing, enriching bringing the great wheel of a man's mortal years around in so ample and complete a circle. The early records of travel, those impressions of Italy recorded, as he reminds us, forty years ago, were quicker and more poignant, but these are blander, serener. The delicate architectural drawings which adorn them are rather like the soft low relief of the style itself. Is the book Mr. Howells's little revenge, his Quip Modest, for "The American Scene"?

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The collection† of Mr. Keppel is a Paradise of dainty devices, a mine of priceless and imperishable delights. He has gleaned afar and offers with both hands out of the stores of his profound connoisseurship—from exquisite French manuscript illuminations, from delicate Italian engravings and from matchless German and Dutch prints. His personal influence has unlocked foreign treasures, and the brilliant examples they yield are beautiful still in reproduction. His personal charm carries off with a grace the tenuous thread of essay. Those who buy it to give away will be tempted to keep it for themselves.

\* "Seven English Cities." By W. D. Howells. New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1909.

† "Christmas in Art: The Nativity as Depicted by Artists of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries." By Frederick Keppel. New York: Duffield & Co., 1909.